

HERZOG OF REDS PICKS BRAVES TO WIN PENNANT—"THE CAST-OFF," BY C. E. VAN LOAN

BOSTON BRAVES WILL WIN PENNANT IN NATIONAL LEAGUE, AVERS HERZOG

Cincinnati Manager Declares Stallings' Team Is Class of Circuit, and Is Now on Way to Victory—Working of Double Steals Recalls Trick of Old Catchers.

"The Braves will win the pennant again if Bill James gets back into shape, and I would not be surprised if they won it without him."

"There is no team in the league in the Braves' class, with the possible exception of Brooklyn, and now that the champions have struck their stride there will be nothing to it," he continued.

"They are not as far down now as they were last season, and in the last series with the Reds they looked better than at any time in 1914. In 1914 they won because they caught the field napping. The field is better balanced and every one is fighting the Braves hard, but they are too strong to be denied. No club in the National League has been able to make any headway or stage a winning streak that would put them out in front, and this has given the Braves their chance. The Dodgers and Phillies have gone along in great shape for a time, but just as soon as they have a chance to take a large lead they slump. When the Braves go out in front they will keep on going. Remember what I tell you. The Braves will be in first place before the first of September and they will stay there."

Players Agree That Braves Are Striking Their Stride

Herzog's opinions are echoed by every member of his team, and Fred Clarke recently said that the Braves were the most dangerous club in the league. That Stallings' team has improved wonderfully in the last three weeks is borne out by the statements of players who have come here after a series in Boston.

The Reds' manager says that the Phillies' only chance lies in Alexander's ability to start the "iron man" act shortly, and for him to hold up to the terrific pace for the rest of the season. This is entirely possible.

If the Braves get within striking distance of first place, and have James, Rudolph and either Davis or Tyler working in order, it will most likely be necessary for Alexander to go to the mound every other day for a month for the Phillies to shake them off. Alexander is in the best shape of his career and declares that he feels capable of doing this, but it may be a larger sized job than he thinks.

Poor Work of James Hindrance to Boston

James is paying the penalty for his actions this spring, when he held the Braves up for a new contract under the threat that he would jump to the Federal League. A new contract was given him after the world's series last fall and one that he signed at his own figures, but he changed his mind about his own worth during the winter and then held the club up. He reported late and was slow rounding into form.

A report reached the East before James went South that he had injured his arm in an exhibition game on the Pacific coast last winter. This was indignantly denied by both Stallings and James when the article was reprinted from these columns, but later developments caused Stallings to admit that such must have been the case, and James was turned over to a specialist, who discovered several badly strained ligaments.

Rudolph, Marvel of Baseball, Coming Into His Own.

The big pitcher has been of little use to the team and has failed to keep step with little Dick Rudolph, who is now on another sensational streak. Rudolph has pitched wonderful ball all year, but has been unfortunate enough to have little hitting and poor fielding aid from his team-mates. He is now working every third day, and intends to go through to the finish at this clip, beside doing relief work.

Rudolph is surely one of the marvels of baseball. It is almost unbelievable that a man with his physique can go to the mound so often and become more effective as the season wears on. If James were back in shape and working as he can when he is right, the Braves would still have a wonderful chance. They are not very far back now.

How Catchers of the Old Days Broke Up Double Steals.

Double steals, with runners on first and second, were worked twice Saturday, and in each instance the man going to third had such a tremendous lead that it was an impossibility for any living catcher to have thrown him out, but still the throw was made. It brings to mind a play that should have been made and one that was once seen often with Johnny Kling, Bill Sullivan, Lou Criger, "Doc" Powers and a few other stars of a few years ago behind the bat.

When those catchers were working and a double steal was started to third and second, with one man out, they invariably threw to second instead of third, and nine times out of ten caught the runner standing up. The man going to second invariably slows up, thinking that the catcher will throw to third to head off the nearest man to the plate, and that is why he can be picked off so easily.

By picking off the man going to second, two men are out and it still takes a single to score a run. There is less chance to catch the runner going to third, and if he is caught there is a man on second and he can still score easily on a single. Chaik, Killefer, Snyder and a few others are wonderful receivers, but they still lack the polish of a few of the old school.

Come-back of Mayer Gives Phils Big Chance on Road

The Phillies opened up their second Western trip in impressive style by defeating Cincinnati with a ninth-inning rally. Bert Niehoff, who was a mark for the Cincinnati twirlers in the series in this city, provided the wallop that clinched the victory for Moran's pennant hopefuls.

The victory was particularly sweet to the Phillies, as it marked the come-back of Erskine Mayer. The side-arm artist was hit rather hard, but always managed to tighten up in the pinches, while his support came to his rescue several times.

Now that the team is on the road and needs victories badly, it is hoped that Mayer will be able to return to his winning stride. His lack of form in the last two weeks prevented the Phillies from getting a large lead in the pennant fight.

Cincinnati Players Begin Loading and Are Fined

Manager Herzog, of the Reds, passed out a few fines and suspensions before the Reds left town, because his players have been loafing. Rube Benton, the big southpaw, was fined \$100 and suspended indefinitely for looking at the bright lights in this city too long, and the same punishment was meted out to Lear, the former Princetonian, who was batted all over the lot by the Phillies in the second game on Saturday. Herzog would not say who were the other players fined, but intimated that several were included, and that they would play better ball and try harder or they would be suspended for the rest of the season without pay.

Athletics' Young Twirler, Knowlson, a Comer

Yesterday was one of the few occasions when both home teams were on the road at the same time, and today is one of the few days during the season when there is no game scheduled in this city. The Athletics have an open date, while the Phillies play in Cincinnati again. The Mackmen lost another doubleheader to Cleveland, but Manager Mack is evidently not worrying much. Two recruits, Knowlson and Cone, were on the mound for the Athletics and the former gave another fine exhibition. Critics throughout the West declare that Mack has a coming star in Knowlson, who has pitched three or four excellent games.

"The Phillies are to recall Joe Oeschger from Providence in September. Charley Doolin once told us he had considered Oeschger one of the finest pitching prospects that he had ever seen, and Doolin certainly knows a twirler when he sees him."—Walter Trumbull in the New York World.

Ad Swigler, star pitcher for the Atlantic Refining Company, is not only a moundman of ability, but a slugger of the Walter Johnson type. In his game Saturday against the fast Victrix team, Swigler not only held his opponents safe, but won the game with a home run drive.

Two small-calibre slingers were all that the strong American Pulley Company team were able to get off Doolin, pitcher for the E. G. Budd Manufacturing Company. The Pulley men did not even threaten seriously to score.

WHEN A FELLER NEEDS A FRIEND



"THE CAST-OFF"

The Rise of G. Audubon Spencer, Alias Slug Hardy—Something He Lacked—His Encounter With Jaggs and the "Tin-can" Episode—What the Fans at Home Thought.

By CHARLES E. VAN LOAN

The world's most famous writer of baseball fiction.

He is not playing baseball now; occasionally the name of G. Audubon Spencer appears in magazines devoted to scientific pursuits, and he has been known to address women's clubs upon protective coloring as applied to lepidoptera. G. Audubon Spencer has a small but highly interested following: Slug Hardy was frantically worshipped by a few hundred thousand peripatetic gentlemen who wouldn't know what lepidoptera meant and wouldn't care very much, either. Yet G. Audubon and Slug are one and the same person.

He called himself Hardy when he decided to become a professional baseball player, and he became a professional baseball player because he needed the money. There was a time when he played the national game for love. He began as the star pitcher of a high-school nine, and when he was 17 years of age he was whitewashing semipro organizations and letting real leaguers down with two and three hits. Then he went to a university, where he made baseball history, and was in a fair way to graduate with some letters after his name when Spencer, Sr., took it into his head to die. He left a large family and a larger mortgage, and young G. Audubon packed his traps and disappeared, to turn up a thousand miles away as Slug Hardy, the star pitcher of a professional team.

He was a sensation for two seasons, partly because he could wrap a ball around a batter's neck and partly because he could hit at a .360 clip from one end of the season to the other, and wallowing pitchers are rare birds.

At 20, Hardy was a veteran pitcher and beginning to feel the effect of too much work. He would have been an exploded phenomenon if it had not been for his foresight. He knew that there comes a time to every pitcher when the strongest wing weakens and the former star is left out on the hill with nothing but a glove and a prayer, so he prepared himself for a new position.

Day after day "Dusty" Moles, his chum, put in his spare time hitting up "fungoes" to the outfield, and Hardy galloped after them. When Slug was ready to stop pitching he was a seasoned outfielder, and it was as an outfielder that he joined the Blue Sox and entered the big league.

There was only one thing the matter with Slug. He was born without a sense of humor. On the other hand, John Henry Patrick Callahan, "Jaggs" Callahan of blessed memory, had too much humor. That was where the trouble started.

Jaggs was not the worst fellow in the world, and not the best, either. His humor, largely of the slapstick variety, often pelted upon his teammates, but they endured him because he could pitch a baseball in seven different languages. His best joke was the one he saved up for white-ked yokels at country stations.

When the train stopped Jaggs would spy out a bucolic loofer with long whiskers and bespeak him to approach, sagging him in close conversation about the town and the price of real estate. Still talking when the train began to move, Jaggs would lean far out of the window, entangle his iron fingers in the rustic's beard and hold on for dear life. The sight of the outraged citizen racing along and screaming with pain and rage was one which never failed to fill Jaggs with pleasure. Sometimes the pitcher lost his



He's not playing baseball now.

grip. Sometimes the yokel lost his face curtains, but whatever happened it was a very fine joke.

The first encounter between Jaggs and Hardy shows what a small thing may put a ball player "in wrong" with his associates. When a player begins by getting "in bad" he nearly always gets out worse. Hardy got out worse.

Jaggs selected the big, red-faced, white-eyebrowed stranger as the softest thing among the recruits, and scraped an acquaintance with him. One evening on the hotel porch at the training camp Jaggs told his famous story of the goat and the tin can. Hardy, silent and thoughtful by nature, overlooked the improbability of the incident, and concerned himself solely with the baseball problem involved.

"Y'see, it was like this," said Jaggs. "I was playin' right field that day, an' this blame' goat kept edgin' in an' edgin' in— you know how them country fair ball

town. The war correspondents seized upon the incident of the goat and the tin can and made it good for anywhere from two sticks to a whole column. Hardy was angry. He reproved one of the reporters.

"But I didn't say all that stuff!" he persisted. "It makes me—well, ridiculous. It isn't fair!"

Then that reporter told his fellow workers that the new outfielder was a rube who objected to press notices and had threatened to punch the head of any correspondent who took his name lightly between the bars of his typewriter.

Hardy was already "in bad" with several members of the team; he was now "in bad" with the press.

"If he drops dead on the field we'll print 10 lines about him," said the press gentlemen. "Otherwise, nix."

So it happened that all the home fans knew about Hardy was the incident of the goat and the tin can. It was not an auspicious introduction.

The season opened on the home grounds, and Hardy, playing a sun field to which he was unaccustomed, dropped a fly ball which he should have "caught in his teeth," as Callahan reminded him, and the error lost the game. This was unfortunate, for a certain clique of leather-lunged rosters on the right-field bleachers decided that the new man would not do.

If a dozen baseball fans select a fixed idea and their voices hold out they can do almost anything. By the end of the first game 20 "regulars" were after the new right fielder, and it pleased them to see Hardy resented their efforts.

Any ball player knows what it means to have enemies in the home town. He expects to get the worst of it on the road, but when he performs at home he expects loyal support and encouragement. One hundred hostile rosters in the home town can bound a player out of the club, and it has happened in almost every city in the league, and will happen again so long as performers are susceptible to outside influence.

The constant chorus of "Tin can! Tin can!" got on Hardy's nerves and worried him. Every time the ball was hit in his direction there went up a sarcastic chorus. The boy was unused to this sort of treatment. In the town where he had previously played he had been somewhat of a local deity. A bad cigar had been named after him, and small boys followed him about the streets. He had never been a grand-slender, but it is one thing to play ball before a friendly crowd and quite another to do one's best when that best brings only jeers and abuse.

Hardy began to make inexcusable errors. He mislaid his batting eye and didn't get his goal, and they kept it. There isn't anything the matter with you, either. You've hit your stride one of these days and show these banal mouths what a

regular outfielder looks like. Buck up, kid!"

Hardy shook his head. "I don't know what's the matter with me. I go up there to hit and I can't see a ball any more."

"You only think so," soothed Daly. "Don't you think I know a sweet hitter when I see one? Why, I never saw a man show up better in spring training! You're just worried, that's all that ails you. Forget it! You'll get started one of these days."

"Another Hank Counterfeit!" the morning papers howled a few days later. "These fellows don't want me in this town," said Hardy to the manager. "They never did want me. They've been knocking me from the start. If it hadn't been for that tin-can thing—" and Hardy broke off miserably.

"Tell me the truth," he said. "Are these fellows right about me? Am I too slow for this company?"

Daly swore heartily. "You've slumped, that's all. If you could only get going once you wouldn't have any trouble. Quit reading the papers, put some cotton in your ears when you get out there and play some baseball."

Hardy tried to follow the directions, but met with flat failure. At the end of his first month he was hitting below .100, and the fire had been turned on Daly. Day after day he was hammered for carrying a counterfeet on the payroll. The manager stood it for two weeks more and then he did something which he expected to regret.

SIX POINTS SHOWING WHY PHILS ARE LEADING NATIONAL LEAGUE

Moran's Club Has Strong Catching, League's Premier Pitcher and Excellent Assistants, Good Infield, Slugging Outfield and One of the Best Managers in Baseball.

By GRANTLAND RICE

The Game and the Piper (Re-entered as a warning to those who see only the gleam and glamour of it all.) This is your Game, old pal—the Game that you loved so well; That crowned you King of the Field through the sweep of a golden spell; That put the world at your feet in the border of dreams-come-true. But here at the end of the trail—well, what has it done for you? It gave you fame in a flash, And rank at a tender age; The thrill of the headlong dash, A Name on the Printed Page. Then jeers for the cheers of old It gave with a snarl of glee; It took your job in the fold— And you were but thirty-three. At the age when most men start On the wide trail's upward steep, It broke your grip—your heart— In the rut where Haabens creep. Acclaimed in the Big Corral, Loud cheered in the Ruling Push— Say, how does it feel, old pal, To be bawled out in the Bush? In the Bush with a work-out wing— Loud cursed on a tank-town lot— The Game—yes, it made you king— Has it made you pay—or not? This is your Game, old pal—the Game that you loved so well; That crowned you King of the Field through the sweep of a golden spell; You've saved from the grip of Time, From the laurel that crowned your brow, A dream and a scornful glove—well, what is the answer now?

The World's Greatest Ball Club NO. 2—FIRST BASE VIG SAIER—Chicago National.

In announcing this selection we stand brazen for the loud roar emanating from various townships—Brooklyn, with Daubert; New York, with Merkle; Philadelphia, with McInnis; Boston, with Schmidt.

Daubert is undoubtedly a grand ball player—a fine batsman and a corking first baseman. Jake can hit and field—two of the main requirements of greatness.

Fred Merkle, batting well over .300, is also playing brilliantly and deserves extended praise for his swift comeback after two seasons of poor batting. Merkle and Daubert are both stars—and so is Stuffy McInnis, the Mackian athlete. But Sailer has been something more this season.

While both Daubert and Merkle have led him a few points at bat, the Chicago former leads his league in runs scored, runs driven across, extra base wallops, total bases and is up at the front in stolen bases.

A ball player who excels in so many ways—and who leads his entire league in so many shifts of offensive play—who is also a hard, loyal worker—must be given the credit he has earned. Hence the Sailer selection.

Last Chance White Sox and Tigers have one more chance left of amassing the Red Sox grip upon first place—and this can only come in a victorious march through the East.

Carrigan's club fought its way to the top upon the Western highway, and returning home so well fixed in the percentage way is now the easy flag choice. With Wood, Leonard, Shore, Ruth, Foster and Collins in shape, there doesn't seem to be a Tiger or a White Sox chance. As baseball dog travels, which is often in a zigzag direction, the Red Sox have only to make a normal showing at home to close out the race.

Those who figure the Phillies a bad ball club, might absorb these few details of dope:

1. In Killefer they have the second best catcher in the league.

2. In Alexander they have the game's greatest pitcher; in Mayer a young star, and in Al Demaree, a former star, who is rumpling back to his own, with more stuff than he has shown since 1913, when he won 18 out of 19 starts.

3. They have a fair infield—not a great one, but a steady one, bolstered up by regular outfielder looks like. Buck up, kid!"

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(CONTINUED TOMORROW.)

BRITTON AND DUNDEE TO BOX

Clash Will Be Feature Fight in New York This Week.

NEW YORK, July 26.—Jack Britton and Johnny Dundee will be the headliners on the pugilistic calendar this week, meeting at Madison Square Garden on Thursday night.

It will be the first meeting of this pair since their last encounter in the latter part of many months. A victory over Britton will eventually lead to a championship match with Welsh, who has dodged the fast Italian since their meeting in New Orleans a year ago.

Young Ahearn Beats Rodol NEW YORK, July 25.—Young Ahearn, of Brooklyn, defeated George Rodol, the boxer, in their 10-round bout at the Brighton Beach race track Saturday night. In every round but the ninth, when Rodol put in several hard punches, Ahearn outboxed and outlasted him. Ahearn weighed 129, Rodol 132 pounds.

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EVENING LEDGER MOVIES—JUST TAKE IT AT THE FLOOD TIDE, PHILS, OLD SCOUTS, AND 'T'WILL BE ALL RIGHT

